

Where Does All the Dirty Water Go?



Protect the Environment in Dallas

WHAT YOU FLUSH OR POUR DOWN YOUR DRAIN AFFECTS THE RIVERS, LAKES, AND COASTAL WATERS IN OUR COMMUNITY.

Where does the water go after you flush the toilet or drain the sinks in your home?

When the wastewater flushed from your toilet or drained from your household sinks, washing machine, or dishwasher leaves your home, it flows through your community's sanitary sewer system to a wastewater treatment facility. The wastewater from homes, along with wastewater from businesses, industries, and other facilities is treated by a variety of processes (see inside for more information) to reduce or remove pollutants.

What happens to the treated water when it leaves the wastewater treatment plant?

The treated wastewater is released into Rickreall Creek where it's used again for any number of purposes, such as supplying drinking water, irrigating crops, and sustaining aquatic life.



Not Down My Drain!

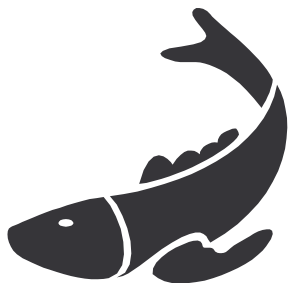
- | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
| X cleaners | X grease |
| X beauty products | X diapers |
| X medicine | X condoms |
| X auto fluids | X feminine hygiene products |
| X paint | X motor oil |
| X lawn care products | X photographic chemicals |



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WASTEWATER TREATMENT 101

- Dallas has a wastewater treatment plant that incorporates a series of processes to remove pollutants from water used in homes, small businesses, industries, and other facilities. All wastewater first goes through the preliminary treatment process, which involves screening out large particles.
- The wastewater then moves on to the secondary treatment process, during which organic matter is removed by allowing bacteria to break down the pollutants. The treated wastewater is then disinfected with ultraviolet light to remove the remaining bacteria.
- After this step, the treated water finally flows through pipes back to Rickreall Creek.



WHAT CAN YOU DO TO PROTECT RICKREALL CREEK?



FLUSH RESPONSIBLY!

Do not pour household products such as cleansers, beauty products, medicine, auto fluids, paint, and lawn care products down the drain. Properly dispose of them at your local household hazardous waste facility

Wastewater treatment facilities are designed to treat organic materials, not hazardous chemicals. If you pour hazardous chemicals down the drain, they might end up in your local rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

Dispose of excess household grease (meat fats, lard, cooking oil, shortening, butter and margarine, etc.) diapers, condoms, and person hygiene products in the garbage can.

These materials can clog pipes, and could cause raw sewage to overflow in your home or yard, or in public areas. Overflows often occur during periods of high rainfall or snowmelt and can result in basement backups, overflows at manholes, or discharges directly to rivers, lakes, and coastal waters.

Don't pour used motor oil down the drain.

Used motor oil can diminish the effectiveness of the treatment process, and might allow contaminants to be discharged. The contaminants could pollute local waterways or harm aquatic life.

If you're a darkroom hobbyist, dispose of spent fixer, developer, and other photographic chemicals in separate containers and transport them to a hazardous waste facility.

Like household hazardous wastes and used motor oil, photographic chemicals can interfere with the wastewater treatment process and could result in pollutants being discharged into Rickreall Creek.